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# THE GREAT FALLACY.

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## A SPEECH

BY THE

Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Derry, D.D.,

DELIVERED IN THE

Albert Hall, London,

ON

*SATURDAY, 22nd APRIL, 1892.*

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# THE GREAT FALLACY.

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THE BISHOP OF DERRY, who was received with loud cheers, proposed the following resolution :—

“ That this meeting records its conviction that the establishment of a separate Parliament and Executive for Ireland, as proposed by the Home Rule Bill now before the House of Commons, would destroy the safeguards of civil and religious liberty in Ireland, unsettle the conditions of her manufactures and commerce, lead to financial confusion, and weaken the influence of Great Britain throughout the world.”

He said :—My Lord Duke, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I labour under many difficulties in speaking upon the present occasion. Although I cannot say that I am unused to public speaking, I am at least unused to speaking upon a political platform. I am afraid that there is hardly any human voice that can make itself very audible in this great hall, and I have a further difficulty in this point, that, unused as I am to political subjects, I can only attempt to do in a much poorer style what has been done—so admirably done—by a number of Unionist members of Parliament. (Hear, hear.) The splendid logic of freedom has had added to it by many hands a new chapter of many paragraphs which absolutely annihilates the fallacies of the logic of a sordid

tyranny. "The many-sided iniquity" of which Mr. Balfour spoke has indeed received a many-sided refutation, which has not left a single shred of it remaining. (Cheers.)

### ***THE LEADING FALLACY OF THE BILL.***

In the remarks which I have to offer to you this afternoon I shall endeavour to confine myself to one subject, upon which a speaker like myself may be supposed to be more at home than upon many others, which may be of deeper interest to those who are skilled in the science of politics. Let me just bring before you, as well as I may, this one single conception. It appears to me that the leading fallacy of the whole case, that which colours the whole of this vast argument, really turns upon that title of the gentlemen who call themselves the nation of Ireland—the Nationalists. (Groans.) They assert that they are, or, at all events, that they represent exclusively, the Irish people and the Irish nation. ("Oh.") That I say is the leading fallacy, and I will try to direct your attention for a short time to what seems to be a refutation of it. Let us look at it first, so to speak, theoretically, and then as it is embodied in this Bill. (Hear, hear.) First of all, then, theoretically, I say the fallacy is this—that Nationalism represents the whole Irish nation. Now, what is the truth about that? Irish gentlemen who are here present will look upon what I have to say as extremely elementary, but I do not think that our English friends know it at all so well. (Hear, hear.) I am perfectly convinced that many members of Parliament who are foremost in the support of this measure, and some who perhaps formed part of the majority of last night, have never fully realized it. Every man who has lived in Ireland knows that in Ireland, in different proportions in different parts of the country, there are two races face to face touching each other, sometimes mingling and yet clearly to be distinguished one from the other. The first is essentially Celtic; that, indeed, in a sense is not strictly accurate, but roughly speaking it is so. One division is essentially Celtic, and the other is essentially English or Scotch.

### THE CELTIC ELEMENT.

Now, then, first of all take the Celtic element. The Prime Minister is nothing if not theological. I do not believe that, as Mr. Gladstone puts it in his habitual theological language—(laughter)—my Celtic fellow-countrymen have a double dose of original sin. They are very human beings, and some of them are very fine human beings. (Cheers.) They are as a general rule affectionate in their homes and wonderfully pure in their lives. When their souls are turned to heaven they are capable of being intensely devout. They are in many cases, according to their own notion of it, very patriotic, and I should indeed rather be silent for ever upon a platform of this kind than speak lightly of priests like Father Burke, or of tribunes like Daniel O'Connell. (Cheers.) But perhaps I may be allowed to say that it seems to me that they have some corresponding defects. They are sequacious, by which I mean that they are apt to follow leaders who are sometimes not very trustworthy. (Laughter and cheers.) They are tenacious; not always tenacious of that which is good, but specially tenacious of the communistic ideas which are inveterate in their race. How tenacious they are you may be able to judge from an extract which has long been familiar to me, and which, I think, possesses a very real interest. There was a writer called Lalor, whose productions appeared, rather appropriately from the name, in the *Irish Felon* in the year 1848. This man Lalor gives us the leading idea of the whole question. He states in one of his papers that there were two simple propositions and two principles of action by which the Celtic element might obtain what they wished. The first was that the absolute ownership of the land is vested in the Irish people, and the second is that all titles to land are invalid unless they are at least confirmed by the Irish people. (Cheers and laughter.) The principles of the mode of action are two. First, refuse the payment of rent; and, secondly, resist all processes of ejectment. Here you have the root of the whole matter. Here you have the leading idea of the Land League, and the present Bill is Lalorism legalized. (Cheers.)

## *THE MINORITY.*

Now I may be allowed to speak of the Scotch and the English race. I suppose that we who belong to that element of the people of Ireland have our share in their faults. A very interesting form of confession has been lately adopted. In old times a man used to confess his own sins, and we have most delightful volumes which contain such confessions. But in more modern days a very distinguished writer and speaker has taken to confessing, not his own sins, but the sins of the English people. (Cheers) He seems to think that the sins of you English people need a little wholesome discipline, and, as he has so often been Prime Minister, he is quite capable of understanding the depth of your sinfulness—(laughter)—and also the effective mode of administering the necessary castigation. (Renewed laughter.) But our English and Scotch people who live in Ireland are a hardy and industrious race. Many of them have attained to the greatest eminence as men of science, military men, merchants, administrators in foreign colonies, and so forth. In numbers they are no doubt greatly inferior to the other element; but I would have you observe that the balance of numbers against us is being wonderfully redressed. (Hear, hear.) There is an expression—it expresses a foul distinction—it is one of the foulest pieces of English that can possibly be found—“the propertied classes.” The propertied classes, then, among

## *OUR ROMAN CATHOLIC FRIENDS*

are, as a general rule, entirely on our side. (Hear, hear.) We have instances of it, I am thankful to say, upon this very platform. (Cheers.) The farmers who have large farms are in many cases coming forward. They have written letters in the Irish papers, and have placed their names at the bottom of them. (Hear, hear.) I am perfectly convinced that if you take into account the whole mass of the Protestant population—for they are Unionists with about the same exception of numbers as the lunatics in their body—(laughter)—if you take them into account



and take into account also the brave and true-hearted Roman Catholics who stand with us—(loud cheers)—I believe that it is greatly under the mark to say that we have a third part of the population. I believe we have nearly 2,000,000 out of the  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions of people in Ireland. And so I say that the proposition that one important section represents the whole people of Ireland is not only incomplete, but is one of the most dangerous assertions that can possibly be made. (Cheers.) In the dreary and squalid history—for so it is on both sides—of the Irish Rebellion, and of the years which immediately followed it, one of the most touching incidents is the death of Lord Kilwarden. Arthur Wolfe, Lord Kilwarden, was dragged out of his carriage and brutally murdered by Emmett's mob in 1803. Just before he died four men were seized who had been concerned in the murder. One of the officers standing by Lord Kilwarden exclaimed:—"Take the four rascals and execute them." But the dying man feebly held up his hand and said:—"No. Swan," that was the officer's name, "let the poor wretches at least have a fair trial." Those words were worthy of a great magistrate and a great Irishman. (Cheers.) Ask Irishmen who are present—I ask every man here who has heard of this—if they would say that Lord Kilwarden was not an Irishman, and one of the Irish people, but that these wretched and ruffianly murderers belonged to the Irish people—(applause)—and so I conclude this portion of my address. Take the words "Nationalist," "the Irish people," "the Irish nation." If the words are falsely used, no matter by whom, nail them to the counter. Tell them that one long experiment was tried in Ireland—namely, the government of the majority by the minority under Protestant ascendancy. That experiment failed. The government of the local majority by the local minority must fail also. Tell them that both alike—the local majority and the local minority—must be ruled firmly, justly, and wisely under the Imperial Parliament—(loud cheers)—and under the sway of our gracious Queen. (Renewed cheers.) In days like this, when the heart of a great people is stirred, there are expressions brief,

pregnant, passionate, and picturesque that leap to the lips of genius. Such an expression was that used by Lord R. Churchill—(loud applause)—the great betrayal. (Applause). And I think you may add that the “great betrayal” is the great fallacy. Let me ask you for a short time to follow this leading fallacy into its practical applications in this extraordinary Bill.

### ***PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION UNDER THE BILL.***

First of all there follows from it a fallacious system of Parliamentary representation. You have only to look at the seventh clause of the Bill, and the first and second schedules. The force of this was brought out in Ireland, as many of you know, with splendid power and fulness, by Mr. Atkinson, who is here on the platform to-day. The members under that precious scheme cannot possibly represent the various interests and various ideas of a great community. In any just and fair system of representation the preponderance of one class must always be more or less balanced by the just rights of another. Is this a Bill for the representation of the Irish people? Nothing of the kind. It is an agrarian Bill for the representation of the small farmers and of the working labourers, and it may almost be said that it is a Bill for the representation of no one else. Gentlemen who call themselves “Nationalists” are fond of quoting Mr. Grattan. Well, what did he say about Irish Parliamentary reform in his day? This is what he says—“Transfer the power of the State to those who have nothing in the country, and they will afterwards transfer the property of others and annex it once more to the power in their own persons. (Laughter.) Give them your power, and they will give themselves your property.” (Applause.) This legislating for Nationalists as if they formed the whole of the nation impresses these two characteristics upon the Bill. The Bill has been dictated by the small farmers, and is meant for them almost exclusively. We have a saying in Ireland that a man who does not do well and relapses into something like barbarism “goes back to bog.” And

so this Bill is a "Bill of the Bog." But it is also something more. It has been manipulated by conspirators. (Loud cheers.) Of course we make all due allowance for a little obscurity here and there in drafting. (Laughter.) But besides being a Bill of the Bog, it is so hard to make out its bearing upon such trifles as our lives, our liberty, our property—(laughter and cheers)—that it is also a "Bill of the Fog." (Cheers.)

### ***THE RIGHT OF RESISTANCE.***

Well, the second great fallacy which arises from the master fallacy is this—that those who are responsible for this Bill have formed an extremely fallacious estimate of the volume of resistance to it which exists in Ireland. (Cheers.) I know how many words have been spent upon metaphysical questions with reference to resistance and its lawfulness, but I am inclined to think that the matter practically comes pretty much to this—that after all there are things which a strong race will hardly submit to—(loud cheers)—unless they are compelled to it, and I am very much inclined to think that practical slavery is just one of those things. (Cheers.) Remember the antecedents of that other race in Ireland. A great writer, Mr. Goldwin Smith, has said that "an atmosphere broods over slave States which is laden with fear from the sense of a great wrong." It has been remarked, and I would commend it to the meditation of the great master of false historical analogies, that there never has been and never was an armed insurrection of slaves in America; but Dr. Channing, in one pregnant and pithy sentence has told us why. "Rome," he said, "had servile wars, but then the slaves had once been freemen." (Cheers.) Now, we are convinced—we are a stupid people, you know, but we have got it into our heads and we are actually wicked enough to be convinced that under the system devised in this Bill we shall be nothing more than slaves. (Hear, hear.) We are told, indeed, about guarantees, but we hardly know how they will be enforced. We are told about "confidence" and a great many other pieces of gush, but I tell you this

—that a strong race can no more be confiding about its liberty than a pure women can be confiding about her honour. (Loud cheers.) We are strange subjects—we, the objectionable portion of the Irish race—indeed, for this new experiment. There was a Liberal writer, his name was Macaulay, but I suppose he is exploded now : but actually he had the boldness to speak about us as

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in the times of James II. May we not say, without any undue vaunting, that we have saved Ulster for you and with Ulster a great deal more than Ulster in 1688. (Cheers.) And remembering what I do about the times of the Indian Mutiny and about the men—the Lawrences and the others—is it going too far to say that, as we saved Ulster 1688, we helped potently to save India in 1853 ? Let me observe that I do not feel that I am saying anything unworthy of a minister of peace. To warn men of danger is not to create danger. The physician is not guilty of producing the disease whose germs he tells you are lurking in the imperfect sewer. Besides, there is here no question of rebellion—rebellion against Her Majesty, rebellion against the Imperial Parliament. Those are sins no Irishman of the people to which we belong will ever commit. (Hear, hear.) But I really do not know how the constitutional question stands about the new and limited Legislature of 48 councillors (laughter)—and 103 representatives of the people. Why, Grattan spoke against a limited Legislature. He said it was an insult to Ireland, and he gave them another historical analogy which I commend to some historical gentlemen. (Hear, hear.) He said that they had a limited Legislature in the Isle of Man, and he added, “What a Legislature that is. It is free from the influence of opinion, free from the influence of duty, directed by prejudices, and unencumbered by knowledge.” (Laughter and cheers.) Another great Irishman—Sheridan—spoke of a Parliament of that kind, and he said, “Talk of a Parliament ! It is a national vestry

for the parish of Ireland." The third fallacy is the strange and frightful under-estimate of the moral repulsion to the projected Legislature. There is one fatal question which will be asked again and again, if this Bill and subsequent legislation are forced upon us. Men will ask why was this Bill given? How was this Bill got? (Hear, hear). Now, mark me, I am not going to try to fasten the guilt of murder upon any individuals amongst my fellow-countrymen. I know that among the members who represent the Nationalist party there are many men who would shrink from anything of the kind as much as I should, but I am obliged to say this. I have seen the dreary record, I have followed it with my pencil page by page, and I know this—that, between January, 1881, and August, 1888, there were

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either perpetrated or attempted in Ireland. (Groans.) I again say that I do not charge any complicity upon particular individuals who represent what is called the Irish party. Mr. Morley—(groans and cries of "Traitor,")—said the other night—and I am sure he said it honestly—that these acts were cruel and detestable, but he seemed to imply that they occurred before the Land Act. Why, that was in 1881, and in 1882 there were 42 persons actually murdered—one a woman of 80, another a child of four. But when this great gift comes to the people of Ireland, then we are told there will be a moral miracle such as the world has never seen before, and all the past sin will be washed away. Yes, but the world will not forget the crime which won the power. Napoleon III. to the last day of his reign as Emperor used to say that he always dragged with him the ball, the log of the 3rd of December. Queen Mary—whose memory is not loved in England—in her reign of five years there were only 200 victims. But those two hundred have left an impression which two hundred years have not effaced. There is a story told with marvellous power in the poems of Victor Hugo. The great poet tells us how a usurper committed a murder through which he obtained a throne. At last death came and his

spirit went forth through the darkness to the eternal light. Something in his soul prompted him to take his sword with him and to cut for himself a mantle of snow that he might be allowed to pass through the gate into the place where nothing red with guilt can enter. As he moved onward he saw gathering over him a cloud, from which fell drops which seemed to him to be drops of rain. But they were drops of blood, and when he came to the gates of Paradise a voice forbade him to enter in. And so he went on week after week and month after month, but still he was not allowed to enter. So it will be with Governments that have profited by "sombre acquiescence in crime." Even suppose them to repent, the crimson drops pour down upon them from the cloud of their irredeemable past. (Cheers.)

### ***THE RELIGIOUS QUESTION.***

Now—and it is the last word—there is the religious question. Whether we like it or not, the two races mean two forms of religion. It is hardly surprising that the religious question should manifest itself from time to time in Ireland. The wars of Elizabeth were religious wars, the great war of 1642 was a religious war, the war of 1688 was a war of religion, and at the root of very much that happened in 1798 there was a religious question. Now, surely, the aim of all wise legislation should be to make men forget these records of an unhappy past. It was the aim of Grattan—he said it in his dying days—to join the two peoples into one and to soften and efface these harsh old memories by blending together the professors of the two creeds as far as could be done. We want the quietude of statesmanship. Gentlemen, those of you who are cricketers know what a demon bowler means. When we talk of a demon bowler, we do not mean a monster in human form, but one who is a sensational bowler. He bowls as fast as a whirlwind; he knocks over stumps and splits them in two; he not only hurts the man at the wicket but sometimes knocks down even the umpire and some of the bystanders. He loses more by the number of byes which are run than he gains by the wickets which

he takes. I think that a demon statesman—(cheers)—you will understand that I mean nothing personal—(laughter)—a demon statesman is the fascinating desperado of politics. (Cheers.) He always does things by the most violent means conceivable. Let me quote four lines of poetry, part of a sonnet—as far as I know the only sonnet ever written by Benjamin Disraeli. (Cheers.) Lord Beaconsfield addressed the lines to the memory of Lord Wellington, and in speaking of his characteristics he said :—

“No gusts of mind  
Fifful and wild, but that continued state  
Of ordered impulse mariners await  
In some benignant and enriching wind.”

Like that great statesman, the Earl of Derby, whose loss England is deploring at the present moment. (Hear, hear.) And when we are talking about the religious question and certain possibilities in it, we are told that we are raising up a bogey, that we are afraid of the thumbscrew and the stake. No ; we are afraid of nothing of the kind. But we have amongst us a few men a little less stupid than the rest of us : and they conceive that within the four corners of this Bill is a surreptitious endowment of the dominant church and much else. (Laughter.) There is one distinguished man of science ; his name is Dr. Salmon, and he has told us pretty plainly what the financial result of the adoption of Home Rule will be for the Church to which I belong. There are men profoundly acquainted with the Church of Ireland who tell us what the state of that Church will inevitably be. We have a few lawyers, of whom the world knows something, and in reference to the guarantees they think that the University of Dublin—perhaps because it is the only constituency in Ireland which has not a single illiterate voter—is seriously threatened. All other Protestant institutions are threatened. Therefore it is that to-day from this platform, and on every occasion, wherever we can, we, the Protestants of Ireland, appeal to our Protestant brethren in Great Britain. (Cheers.) We appeal to the Protestant Nonconformists.

(Hear, hear.) We admire Mr. Gladstone's talents exceedingly, but we tell him the Irish Protestants do not trust him. (Hear, hear and applause.) I do not believe our Roman Catholic friends really put more trust in the author of "Vatican and Vaticanism" than we do. They know very well when Home Rule was first in sight

### *CARDINAL CULLEN*

passed upon it the most authoritative condemnation, and said it was got up in the interest of an irreligious and revolutionary party. (Cheers.) But let me say that out of all this evil there has come to us one blessing—the blessing of unity. All the religions in Ireland are represented on this platform. (Cheers.) Loyalty has, thank God, ceased to be a sectarian word. (Loud cheers.) Noble-minded Roman Catholics are as loyal to the Queen and Constitution as we are. (Renewed cheers.) Gentlemen, will you allow me to say that, before I came here, I prayed to my Heavenly Father that, for one moment at least, there might be given to me one of those golden and pregnant moments when a spirit of peace seems to move over a great assembly. You will pardon the egotism of an old man if I tell you what happened to myself, many years ago, when I was a clergyman in a country parish. There was in that parish a true-hearted and worthy old priest. It was my happiness to possess his intimate acquaintance, and when I left that parish I paid him a farewell visit. The kind-hearted old man put his strong arm round my neck and said:—"We are bidding farewell to each other, but remember this, the one Heaven is big enough to hold us both, and the one Saviour's heart is big enough to love us both." It is in the spirit of that good old man's words that I would speak to each and every one in Ireland. (Cheers.) I wish the old religious dissensions and jealousies to be obliterated. I wish all good men and true to be joined together in affection. (Renewed cheering.) As I was passing a night or two ago through the glens of Antrim, associated as they are with stories of fierce fights and wild struggles in the olden times, as the sunlight was dying away on the spring clad slopes, the words of the



psalm came into my mind, "The mountains shall bring peace, and the little hills righteousness unto the people." Do you not see how the two things, righteousness and peace, stand together? Without righteousness there can be no true peace. There is no justice, no righteousness in this Bill—(loud cheers)—none in its provisions, none in the clauses, none in the schedules, which jockey the poor policeman and cheat the poor Civil servant, and ruin the landlord, and break the widow's heart. (Renewed cheers.) It pours its shoddy gifts and lavishes its shabby benedictions upon those who are dishonest and untrustworthy—(hear, hear)—and it places those men in power. And as it has no righteousness it can give no peace. And so, in bidding farewell to this imbecile caricature of a Constitution for Ireland—(loud and prolonged cheering)—I ask you to carry away with you this brief summary :—Morally, it is the great betrayal—(cheers)—logically, it is the great fallacy—(cheers)—religiously, it is the great sectarianism—(cheers)—financially, it is the great swindle—socially, it is the great break up—(cheers)—and, Imperially, it is the great break down. (Vociferous cheering).

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